

Letterkenny Army Depot reaches 75th anniversary milestone

By: Janet S. Gardner, Letterkenny Public Affairs

Chambersburg, Pa., - Letterkenny Army Depot celebrated its 75th anniversary on July 17, with Col. Deacon Maddox, the depot's 48th Commander, presiding.

"For 75 years, when our Soldiers have reached back, the people of Letterkenny delivered," Maddox said, as he addressed the depot artisans, dignitaries, local politicians, community leaders and business partners assembled for the celebration at the Depot's Recreation Area.

It all began on Friday, July 17, 1942, when Col. John K. Clement arrived at Letterkenny Ordnance Depot as the first Commander of the newly-formed depot whose mission was that of an ammunition storage and shipment facility. Clement immediately took charge and lead the workforce in accomplishing its first shipment of ammunition, three weeks ahead of schedule.

A year later, Letterkenny's mission expanded to include the repair and maintenance of other equipment, including small arms. In 1945 additional depot functions included the assignment of spare parts supply for heavy duty general purpose vehicles.

"Today, Letterkenny is a place where the nation gathers some of the most skilled and most patriotic civilian artisans from across four states, many of them veterans and many of them combat veterans," Maddox said. "The nation gives them tools, facilities and equipment. It gives them repair parts and finished materials. It gives them engineering and computer systems. In return, the artisans give the nation's Soldiers' platforms from which they can protect themselves, their buddies, the Nation's allies and the American people."

Mike Ross, President of the Franklin County Area Development Corporation and Chair of Team Letterkenny, also acknowledged the Depot. "The success of the depot from 1942 until today can be directly correlated to the commitment and dedication of the employees to making the installation the best that it can be," Ross said. "There are numerous families across Franklin County who are in their fourth generation of working at the depot. The skill sets and institutional knowledge that has been developed here over the last 75 years simply cannot be replicated anywhere else.

"Every community in the country wants a Letterkenny. They want an anchor employer that is home to more than 3,200 workers and can create a \$300 million annual economic impact. They want to know that their installation has a global reputation for operational excellence which is delivering defense systems that are protecting our allies who are under the threat of hostile forces."

Contributing to the depot's success is its unique tactical missile repair capabilities in support of the DOD missile systems including the Patriot ground support and radar equipment.

Comprising over 17,500 acres, the depot is the largest employer in Franklin County, Pa.



COL Deacon Maddox reads the contents list for the 100th anniversary time capsule as former depot commanders Robert Swenson and Thomas Resau enjoy the many submissions from the depot's eight directorates. Photo courtesy of Pamela Goodhart, Letterkenny Army Depot photographer



Depot Commander Col. Deacon Maddox shows the oldest depot employee, Mr. Kenneth Sipes, and the depot's youngest employee, Mr. Taha Shamshudin, how to properly cut a cake, Army style! Photo courtesy of Pamela Goodhart, Letterkenny Army Depot photographer.